

Remarks/Arguments

I. Examiner's Rejection

In the Office Action dated September 19, 2005 the Examiner rejected claims 1-28 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hunter (U.S. Patent No. 5,243,654). As set out below, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

II. Status of Claims

Claims 1-28 were pending in this Application. Applicant has cancelled claim 13 without prejudice or disclaimer, amended claims 1-12, 14-17 and 22-26 to more fully recite the subject matter of the claimed invention. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the above amendments and consideration of the enclosed remarks. Accordingly, claims 1-12 and 14-28 remain pending in the Application. Claims 1, 8 and 16 are independent claims.

III. Claims 1-12 and 14-28 are not anticipated by Hunter (U.S. Patent No. 5,243,654)

Independent claims 1 and 8 recite, among other things, "a plurality of sensors for collecting system data". In addition, independent claims 8 and 16 recite "a comparator for comparing the measured data with predetermined sets of data" and "comparing the monitored parameter with a predetermined value to determine a comparison result", respectively. Hunter fails to disclose these elements.

With respect to claims 1 and 8, the Examiner asserts that Hunter discloses a plurality of sensors for collecting system data. (fig. 4, reference numeral 210, col. 6, lines 58-59 and col. 7, lines 35-36). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

A plurality of sensors refers to more than one sensor. Hunter only discloses a single sensor, sensor 210. Sensor 210 is connected to meter 220. It provides the current reading of the meter. (col. 6, lines 63-64). As such, Hunter fails to disclose a plurality of sensors as recited in independent claims 1 and 8.

Further, regarding claim 1 only, Hunter fails to disclose a plurality of sensors for collecting system data. In the specification, "system data" is given a specific definition and is defined as, "data related to the conditions of the mail processing equipment. Such information may include, for example, wear and tear of system parts, the system throughput, the efficiency at which the system is operating, the operating conditions of the system, such as operating temperature, pressure, and the like." (Specification at pg. 6, lines 6-10).

Meter 220 is described as any conventional utility meter such as a gas, electric or water meter. (col. 6, lines 62-63). It is important to note that Hunter's section B, wherein sensor 210 and meter 220 are described, is entitled, "Utility Metering System with Time Lockout." As such, the current reading of utility meter 220 has no relation to system data (i.e., the conditions of the mail processing equipment). Therefore, Hunter fails to disclose system data as recited in claim 1.

Turning to the comparator of claim 8, and comparing in claim 16, the Examiner asserts that Hunter discloses comparing the measured data with predetermined data. (Fig. 5B, step 268). However, a careful examination of the discussion with respect to step 268 indicates that the comparison is between the current meter reading from sensor 210 encrypted by the data center 20 at step 306, then decrypted at step 268, and the current stored meter reading from sensor 210. (col. 8, lines 50-52 and col. 7, lines 61-66). As such, the comparison in Hunter, as referenced by the Examiner, compares the same measured sensor data. Simply put, there is never any

comparison with any form of predetermined value or data, as recited in independent claims 8 and 16.

For at least the above reasons, independent claims 1, 8 and 16 are not anticipated by Hunter and should be allowed. In addition, since claims 2-7 depend from claim 1, claims 9-12 and 14-15 depend from claim 8, and claims 17-28 depend from claim 16, these dependant claims should also be allowed at least in view of their respective dependencies, and for the above reasons with respect to independent claims 1, 8 and 16.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims of this application are now in a condition for allowance and favorable action thereon is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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